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University of Applied Sciences



Master of Arts  
Intercultural Conflict  
Management  
(MA-ICM)

Evaluation,  
Examination and  
Master Thesis Manual  
Academic Year 2024

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## I. Fundamentals

The legal foundations for evaluating student performance are established by the ASH General Study and Evaluation Regulations (RSPO) and the Specific Study and Evaluation Regulations of the ICM program. The following statements are derived from these regulations and the currently valid Module Manual.

### 1. Evaluations at ASH Berlin (RSPO § 14)

1. **Eligibility:** Students must be properly enrolled, meet course requirements, attend classes, and register for exams.
2. **Examiner:** Typically, the course lecturer. If multiple lecturers are involved, the examiner is chosen in consultation with the evaluation board. Evaluations content aligns with module objectives.
3. **Timing:** Evaluations must be completed during the course or by the semester's end. Exceptions may allow later evaluations.
4. **Form:** Evaluations can be written or oral, as specified in module regulations. Two forms must be offered if allowed. Written work must note independent preparation and source use. Consistency between written and electronic submissions is required. Previously used work must be disclosed.
5. **Passing:** An evaluation is passed if graded at least "sufficient" or "passed". Grading follows specific regulations, with written explanations for assessments. Oral evaluation assessments are registered in a protocol.
6. **Individual vs. Group:** Evaluations are typically individual but can be done in group if justified, ensuring that each student's contribution is identifiable and assessable.
7. **Language:** Evaluations are in English.

#### 1.1 Written Evaluations at ASH Berlin (RSPO § 15)

1. **Objective:** Assess if students can present subject facts and issues or develop solutions within limited time and resources.
2. **Format:** Assignments can be thematic or question-based.
3. **Essay Written Evaluations:** These involve independent task completion within a set period. They test the student's ability to handle academic literature, analyze empirical findings, or solve practical tasks. Topics are indicated by the examiner, with options provided to the student.
4. **Practical Report:** This report covers experiences from practical training, showing the student's ability to integrate and reflect on academic and practical knowledge. Further details are specified by the regulations of the degree program.

#### 1.2 Oral Evaluations at ASH Berlin (RSPO § 16)

1. **Objective:** Determine if students have a comprehensive understanding of the course content and can discuss its academic and practical significance.
2. **Examiner:** The course teacher is the default examiner.
3. **Duration:** Oral evaluations last 20 to 30 minutes per student or group. Results are announced after the evaluation.
4. **Presentation:** Includes an oral presentation within the course, accompanied by a written document.

5. **Professional Presentation:** Involves oral and written or media-documented presentation of work using professional methods within the course.

## 2. Modul Evaluation

The curriculum is organized into modules, each of which requires evaluation. Assessments can take various forms, as outlined in the course manual. At the beginning of each course, instructors must inform students of the specific evaluation methods for each module. Evaluations may comprise multiple successfully completed graded tasks. Each module spans one semester.

### 2.1 Theoretical modules

The evaluation of these modules will be conducted through oral or/and written assignments, as specified in the program manual. Each lecturer will determine the most appropriate grading method for their course.

### 2.2 Practical modules

The evaluation of these modules will be conducted as specified in the program manual, taking group work into consideration. In all cases, the teacher will determine the most appropriate evaluation method.

### 2.3 Specialization modules

**Workshops:** attendance is mandatory (see special observation in this regard) **Seminars:** Each seminar in the 2nd and 3rd semester is evaluated through oral or/and written assignments, as specified in the program manual. The content of these evaluations is defined by each teacher.

### 2.4 Thesis and Colloquia

This module is exclusively dedicated to the final master's thesis. The formal requirements and objectives are detailed in the module handbook. Beyond the submission of the completed project, no additional evaluations are required. The project can be conducted in group, if approved by the program evaluation committee. It is important to note that the master's thesis must be empirical; purely theoretical work will not be accepted.

The program evaluation committee will determine the acceptability of each project. To be accepted, a thesis proposal (see Attachment 11.1) must be submitted to the evaluation committee by the established deadline. The format of the project may vary, depending on the field requirements. While preference is given to the project format, we recommend following the exposé provided in Attachment 12 and reaching an agreement with your supervisors regarding its use. The master's thesis is typically a written work, assessed by two evaluators.

## 3. Supervision

The primary supervisor should be an ICM and or ASH professor. The second supervisor may be someone from outside of ICM, provided he or she has at least a Master degree and preferably a PhD. It is advisable to involve external supervisors only if they are familiar with the ICM philosophy. In addition, the search for a supervisor should begin early, and personal requirements in terms of time and intensity should be discussed and agreed upon.

Primary supervisors may support the research process through a master's colloquium. Participation in such colloquia is not mandatory but should be understood as an academic opportunity for support and learning purposes.

As a rule, deadlines may not be extended. Exceptions may be authorized in the case of illness, or other difficult personal circumstances, for which a corresponding medical (or other) certificate is required.

Standards of good scientific work:

- ✓ Although ICM places great emphasis on practical orientation, the fundamental standards of good scientific practice apply to all projects. There are no exceptions here. These standards are learned in the workshop Scientific Writing, and they apply to presentations, essays, protocols and to the master's thesis.

- ✓ Internet sources: are acceptable, only when reference is made to the author, year, and place, as well as the URL and the date of most recent access. Wikipedia and other similar sources are not acceptable.
- ✓ All scientific works contain a cover page and table of contents, and explicitly state that the research was completed independently, with no external help beyond that indicated in the references.

#### 4. Attendance requirement

In accordance with the Specific Regulations for Study and Evaluation and the Module Handbook, attendance in all program courses is mandatory. There are no exceptions to this rule.

In the case of four non-justified absences, the corresponding teachers will subtract 0.3 grade points for each additional absence and or offer an extra assignment.

## II. About the master's thesis

### 1. Basic information for all students

The central aspect of the MA-ICM program is oriented towards practical application of scientific knowledge at master's level qualification requirements. After this program ICM graduates may undertake a PhD. This means that the master's thesis should demonstrate the ability to work both in an application-oriented and scientific manner. The ideal combination of both components lies in empirical scientific work.

About empirical work:

Empirical social research can take many forms. The word empiricism means "experience" - empirical therefore means "based on experience". The translation already shows what is meant by this type of research. A systematic and standardized process is used to gain knowledge about an object of investigation that is based on social experience. Namely the experiences of others within social interaction. The standardized and systematic cognitive process are now the methods with which students seek to understand social experiences and conflicts. The collected data must be analysed and then interpreted. It is only from this interpretation that an understanding of social experiences and conflicts emerges.

About the form:

The philosophy and concept of the MA-ICM course now offer a wide range of opportunities to approach empirical social research in a systematic and standardized way. Among others, the social research process may have the form of a conflict management or transformation project, a conflict management or transformation assessment or it can be a traditional empirical social research work.

#### 1.1 General requirements (mandatory)

The thesis serves to reflect the following skills:

- apply and demonstrate the results of individual learning obtained during the program, within the framework of an independent empirical research project
- select and justify the appropriate use of methodologies
- conduct literature reviews
- demonstrate and apply the appropriate skills to perform analytical and applied research and to communicate it effectively, as well as to make comparisons and recommendations
- make an original contribution to the chosen area of study based on the results of the empirical research

## 1.2 *Scholarship possibility*

The DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) and other organisations offer scholarships for studies and research abroad. Applications must be submitted well in advance, at least three months before the planned research period. The deadlines vary for Latin America, Africa, Asia, Australia, New Zealand, and Oceania.

→ Please consult the DAAD website and or the scholarship list which you can find on the ICM website under downloads .

In addition, students have the opportunity to complete their final thesis in an international context during the 4th semester. Since the thesis must have an empirical orientation, a stay abroad is an option. Students can count on the support of the International Office in preparation for this. Support includes a very extensive database, advice on scholarships for the stay abroad and in-depth experience in this matter.

## 2. *Procedures and formal criteria*

The preparation and examination of the thesis occur in three distinct phases:

- development of the thesis proposal
- approval of the thesis proposal
- completion of the thesis.

### *a. Thesis supervisors and tutors*

A tentative thesis topic should be selected early in the course of the program. Once a topic has been chosen, it should be discussed with the thesis advisor.

The thesis advisor must be an ICM and/or ASH professor. The second reader may be someone from outside of ICM, provided they have demonstrable knowledge about the thesis topic and hold at least an M.A. but preferably a Ph.D.

### *b. Approval of the thesis proposal summary (exposé)*

The thesis topic and a brief summary of the proposal must be formally approved by the ASH "Evaluation Commission," the advisor, and the second reader. **The form provided in Section 11.1 of this manual should be used.**

### *c. Completion of the thesis*

It is the **student's responsibility** to ensure that the advisor is kept informed about the progress of the research and that the necessary meetings are coordinated.

## 3. *Role of the thesis advisor and second reader*

The Master's thesis must be assessed by at least two evaluators: a thesis advisor and a second evaluator (reader). In general, the supervisor should be the first person contacted. Other professors in the program may also be contacted for thesis supervision; preferably, they should belong to the official faculty of university professors. **A professor whose area of research is closely related to the thesis topic should be chosen. The thesis advisor must be an ICM and/or ASH professor.**

The thesis may be supervised directly, through meetings and in-person consultations, or indirectly, through written comments and feedback. A colloquium may be organized by the advisor for receiving feedback and building community among the master's students. An evaluation report of the thesis will be prepared by the advisor, and a grade will be assigned. Coordination of meetings with the advisor must be managed by the student. Conversations with the advisor will be more productive if written reports of progress are provided in advance.

The consent of the advisor to the presentation of the thesis does not necessarily indicate that the thesis will receive a passing grade.

**Thesis advisors must:**

- help the student prepare a participatory action research project;
- guide the research process and the intellectual development of the thesis;
- facilitate access to essential resources and research contacts;
- provide encouragement and support while the student is writing the thesis.

***Do not expect your advisor to read the first draft of your thesis in its entirety. Supervisors ordinarily read approximately one third of the draft.***

**Second readers must:**

Evaluate the thesis according to the scientific criteria described in this manual, considering the evaluation of the thesis advisor. The thesis advisor and the second reader must agree on the final grade. Second readers are typically members of the ASH faculty.

***Please keep in mind:***

In the event of a discrepancy of more than one grade between the thesis advisor's and second reader's assessments, the Evaluation Commission will name a third evaluator to determine the thesis grade. In any case, the thesis may be graded as "sufficient" or better only if at least two evaluations were "sufficient" or better.

About the practice of academic work

The practice of scientific work is not covered in detail in this manual. Instead, it highlights the extensive literature available on academic writing. It is assumed that students admitted to a Master's program have already applied these skills. Nevertheless, the MA ICM program offers a workshop on all relevant topics.

Reference should also be made to "**The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity**": <http://www.allea.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/ALLEA-European-Code-of-Conduct-for-Research-Integrity-2017-1.pdf>. Based on many years of experience, we would highly recommend to review this Code of Conduct.

Nevertheless, some recommendations for writing the Master's thesis can be found in the appendix. These are intended to assist with initial thoughts on research. In the end, however, it is important that an agreement regarding the procedure is reached with the supervisor.

#### 4. General requirements before beginning the thesis

Before beginning the Master's thesis, all required exams and courses must be passed satisfactorily.

#### 5. Schedule and deadlines

Scheduling is often a matter of setting a deadline and working backwards from it, and realistic time management takes into account uncertainties and contingencies. Remember a wise planner allows time for the unexpected. Regarding the budget, for example, if your research requires travel, we recommend careful time management.

- The deadline for presenting the Master's thesis topic to the Program Coordinator is **Mid-February each year**. Both the thesis advisor and second reader must have confirmed the topic and signed the thesis proposal by the due date (see pages 20-21).
- Once the Master's thesis topic has been approved by ASH, you can officially start at the end **of February each year**.

- The deadline for submitting the complete thesis to the Program Coordination is 30 weeks, with the latest being the end of **September each year**.
- The final grade will be sent by email as soon as the Program Coordination receives a notification from both evaluators.

## 6. [Criteria for evaluating the Master's thesis/Project](#)

(In accordance with § 10 of the Evaluation Regulations, ASH.)

The Master's thesis will be evaluated according to ASH's grading system. Your thesis grade will be decided by the advisor and second reader. The guidelines for determining grades are as follows:

### **1.0** **Excellent**

The criteria for obtaining this grade are:

- clear and strictly justifiable application of your chosen research methods
- equitable, clear, and transparent participation of all others involved in the research;
- an original work that demonstrates creativity, lucidity, and logical argumentation;
- expert knowledge of the subject matter;
- use of excellent (creative and innovative) and always suitable, methods of interpretation, and corresponding materials and instruments during the empirical research;
- conducting an exhaustive reading that demonstrates critical thinking;
- selective and creative application of theoretical, analytical, and practical skills;
- an excellent research result, with only a few insignificant errors, especially in the application of the chosen research methods.

### **1.3** **Very good**

The criteria for obtaining this grade are:

- clear and strictly justifiable application of your chosen research methods;
- equitable, clear, and transparent participation of all others involved in the research;
- a very good work that demonstrates creativity, lucidity, and logical argumentation;
- good knowledge of the topic;
- use of very good and adequate methods of interpretation, and corresponding materials and instruments during the empirical research;
- conducting an exhaustive reading that demonstrates critical thinking;
- selective and creative application of theoretical, analytical, and practical skills;
- a very good research result, with only a few insignificant errors, especially in the application of methodological triangulation.

### **1.7, or 2.0, or 2.3** **Good**

The criteria for obtaining this grade are:

- clear and justifiable application of your chosen research methods;
- participation of and with people in the field;
- a considerable work, which demonstrates a good understanding of the subject and its complexities;
- demonstration of extensive background research;
- exhibition of independent analysis and interpretation, executed with critical thinking;
- a good, solid result which, however, does not fully correspond to the qualification criteria, especially in the application of the chosen research methods.

### **2.7, or 3, or 3.3** **Satisfactory**

The requirements for obtaining this grade are:

- clear but not entirely justifiable application of your chosen research methods;
- insufficient participation of and with people in the field, whose role in the research has been only occasional;
- satisfactory work, which demonstrates an understanding of important aspects of the subject;
- exhibition of a critical dialogue with the material investigated;
- completion of a satisfactory amount of background reading;



- a satisfactory result, although with obvious errors and omissions that prevent the assignment of a higher grade, especially related to lack of understanding and the application of chosen research methods

### **3.7, or 4            Sufficient**

The requirements for obtaining this grade are:

- only partial application of research methods in a technical manner, without the participation of and with people in the field;
- a sufficient work that demonstrates a certain understanding, although limited, of some important aspects of the subject and the empirical essence of a Master's degree;
- exhibition of sufficient theoretical knowledge that, however, does not reflect creativity or originality in the analysis and interpretation of ideas;
- a result that corresponds to the minimum required.

### **4.1 – 5.0            Fail**

The requirements for obtaining this grade are:

- poor or insufficient work, which does not demonstrate a critical dialogue with the investigated material or the research is not an empirically one;
- does not contain a literature review or satisfactory analysis;
- a result that needs considerable improvement.
- the work does not fulfil the required quantitative scope

7. Appendix

7.1 Cover page

**THESIS TITLE**

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
The Alice Salomon Hochschule  
- University of Applied Sciences -  
Alice-Salomon-Platz 5  
D-12627 Berlin

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In Partial Fulfilment  
Of the Requirements for the Academic Degree  
Master of Arts  
"Intercultural Conflict Management"

---

Written By  
*(Your full name here)*

Month, year

- This should be properly centred on the page, leaving five blank lines at the top of the page.

7.1.1 *Approval sheet*<sup>1</sup>

The thesis of (*your full name here*)  
for the academic degree "Master of Arts"  
has been approved:

Name and title of Thesis Advisor

Name and title of Second Reader

Alice Salomon Hochschule, Berlin

Month, Year

7.1.2 *Table of contents*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

**List of figures**

**List of symbols, tables, graphs, pages (as required)**

---

<sup>1</sup> The first five lines at the top of this page must be left blank, the approval must be centred, and the names of the advisor and second reader must begin in the middle of the page and continue to the right.

	Page
Graph 3.1	100
Graph 3.2	105

This applies for tables and illustrations as well.

## 7.2 *Acknowledgments*

Acknowledge support received from scholarships and other financial aid.

Recognize contributions from professors and friends.

If copyrighted material was used a statement must be included informing the reader that permission was granted and declaring the source.

### 7.3 *Abstract*

THESIS TITLE

Abstract of the thesis by  
*(your full name here)*

**The thesis abstract must begin three lines below the author's name. The line spacing should be 1.5 throughout, and the abstract should be aligned to one side of the page, using the same margins as the body of the thesis. Symbols, foreign words, phrases, and other constructs must be made clear to avoid misinterpretation. A relatively brief statement about the most important parts of the work, written in paragraph form, is expected for the thesis abstract.**

#### 7.4 Certificate of authenticity<sup>2</sup>

I, *(your full name here)*, hereby certify that the thesis presented here is true and correct, to the best of my knowledge. Moreover, I certify that I have conducted the research and written this thesis without any type of external help. In the cases where I have been assisted by others, it has been indicated in the appropriate place within the thesis.

*(your signature here)* Signature  
Place and Date of the signature

---

<sup>2</sup> This certificate will be the last page of your thesis. It should not have a page number.

8. Forms

8.1 M.A. thesis proposal

**Master of Arts**  
"Intercultural Conflict Management"

Alice Salomon Hochschule  
- University of Applied Sciences -

*Mail to:* Alice Salomon Hochschule  
Program Management  
MA "Intercultural Conflict Management"  
Alice-Salomon-Platz 5  
12627 Berlin  
Germany

- The deadline to submit this application is the ...of **February 20...**

<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Surname(s):</b>
<b>Registration Number:</b>	

**M.A. Thesis**

- Language:
- Title (please consult and come to an agreement with your thesis tutor)

Please write a summary<sup>3</sup> of the topic that you plan to research for your Master's thesis (maximum 250 words).

- Description of the problem and its relevance
- Objective of the Master's thesis (in particular as it relates to the usefulness of the work for other researchers: an empirical and ethnographic study)
- Importance of the investigation
- Considerations for the application of methodological triangulation.
- In the case of continuing the participatory research of the 1st-3rd semesters: which elements of the previous research will be continued and which will be suspended.

---

<sup>3</sup> Not to be confused with point 12)







8.2 *Application for changes to the Master's Thesis*

Master of Arts  
"Intercultural Conflict Management"

Alice Salomon Hochschule  
- University of Applied Sciences -

*Mail to:* Alice Salomon Hochschule  
Program Management  
MA "Intercultural Conflict Management"  
Alice-Salomon-Platz 5  
12627 Berlin  
Germany

<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Surname(s):</b>
<b>Registration Number:</b>	

I request the following change:

**I. Replacement of the thesis advisor or second reader:**

Initial advisor:

Replacing with:

Reasons:

**II. Change of the approved Master's thesis title or topic<sup>4</sup>:**

**Initially approved title:**

**New title for approval:**

Reasons: (indicate why you want to change the topic and how/why you chose the new one. Also describe the research you have already undertaken.)

---

**Date and Student's signature**

---

<sup>4</sup> In accordance with § 16 no. 10 of the Evaluation Regulations, the thesis topic may be changed at most once, no later than one month after the confirmation of the Evaluation Commission. This does not alter the submission date.



8.3 M.A. Thesis Evaluation Sheet

Student:

Master's thesis title:

Evaluation:

**Final Grade**

**Grade (ECTS scale):**  
Grade (German scale):

Primary Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Place/Date and Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Place/Date and Signature:

## Guidelines for organisation and reflection before and during the Master's thesis process.

Please note that the following guidelines are intended as an orientation. It is essential to discuss this with the supervisors.

### 1. Preparing the manuscript

**Consult with your supervisors about the specific arrangement of the text and the reference section, as well as the formal criteria.**

Keep in mind that the thesis is a part of your academic career, and will be publicly available.

The printing should be letter quality, with dark black characters that are sufficiently clear and legible. The text accepted by the University is considered final and no further changes can be made, unless the thesis is published elsewhere.

The manuscript normally consists of three consecutive sections:

- preliminary pages
- manuscript body
- references

You should use the examples in the appendix as a model (p. 20-25).

#### 1.1 Manuscript body

Use Arabic numbers for all of the pages in this section. Number the pages consecutively until the end of the text, including all appendices and the bibliography. Place the page number for the first page of each section at the lower right of the page and centered at the bottom of all other pages. You may also choose to centre all page numbers at the bottom of the page.

The length is normally around 25,000 words (in accordance with the general standard of 300 words per A4 page) with a variation of +/-10%. This corresponds only to the body of the manuscript, and does not include preliminary pages, footnotes, supplementary documents, the bibliography, or appendices. Handwritten works will not be accepted.

#### 1.2 References

##### **Bibliography**

Check with your advisor about his or her preferences. You may also follow the standards of your research area, or see the Citations section below.

##### **Appendices**

Each appendix should be listed separately in the Table of Contents. Tables, graphics, or illustrations placed at the end of the text body form an appendix and should not be included in the list of tables, graphs, etc., in the preliminary pages.

##### **Certificate of authenticity**

(See the sample pages at the end of this document)

##### **Tables, figures, and illustrations**

Place the table number and title at the top of each table, and the figure number and legend below each graphic. If you choose to use a different labelling scheme, use it consistently throughout the text. Number all graphics and tables consecutively, either by chapter or sequentially throughout the entire text.

#### 1.3 Submitting the thesis

- Use the same chapter format throughout the thesis.
- Your thesis, being the permanent conclusion of your research, must be free of errors and ready to be bound (we recommend softcover binding; spiral binding may also be accepted).

- You must submit two physical copies of the thesis, and also send a digital copy by email. You may submit the physical copies in person at the ICM program office (room 306) or send them by mail. For in-person submission, be sure to present the copies on or before the due date; if sending them by mail, the postmark must be before the due date.
- A copy of your thesis will be kept in the ASH archive so that it may be accessed by the public. Any interviews that you conducted as part of your thesis research should be accessible to your supervisors, if requested. However, they are not required to be part of the physical or electronic copy of the thesis that you submit, unless otherwise stated.
- The thesis should be written in English.

## 2. Scientific presentation

You may use any style of scientific presentation as long as you have reached an agreement with your advisor. He or she should be familiar with the style you intend to use in your thesis. The most common citation formats are Harvard format and MLA format (most often used in literature and the social sciences). If you choose to use MLA format, please consult the *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*.

### 2.1 Harvard citation format

The Harvard citation format (sometimes referred to as the author-date method) is characterized by placing the author's name, typically followed by the date in parentheses, directly within the body of the text of an essay or thesis.

The work of Foucault (1979) is tremendously important, as it turns our attention toward the connections that exist between health and daily life.

The principle of the author-date method is that the citation in the body of the text contains all information necessary to find that reference in the bibliography. Thus each mention of an author within the text must have a corresponding date, and that same author and date must appear in the bibliography.

### 2.2 Footnotes

You may use footnotes to provide the reader with additional information that, although not essential, is relevant to the body of the text. Footnotes are placed at the bottom of the page and should be used in moderation:

<sup>1</sup> While "irregular migration" is the term preferred by many academics who deal with the issue, European Union institutions consistently use the term "illegal migration".

Footnotes may sometimes include bibliographic references written using the author-date format. Note the use of **ibid.** when consecutive footnotes refer to the same source (see notes 2 y 3). However, if the source is cited again but not consecutively, then the author's name and **op. cit.** should be used (compare notes 2-5).

<sup>2</sup> For an excellent account of the constitutional status of "illegal resident aliens" in the United States, see R. Rubio-Marin (2000) *Immigration as a Democratic Challenge*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>3</sup> It has been considered and questioned whether the exclusion of irregular migrants from social programs and public services in fact makes illegal entry a less appealing option, *Ibid.* 163.

<sup>4</sup> Some scholars have argued for the abolition of migration controls and the recognition of international migration as a human right, see S. Cohen (1992) No one is Illegal, in R. Goodwin and B. Barry (eds.) *Free Movement*. Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press.

<sup>5</sup> As long as there are job opportunities and families wanting to stay together, illegal migration will always be attractive, Rubio-Marin, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

\* **Ibid.** is the abbreviation of the Latin word **ibidem**, which means "the same". It indicates that the author and the source (a book or a journal, for example) are the same as in the immediately preceding citation. **Op. cit.** is the abbreviation of the Latin expression **opus citatum**, which means "the work cited" and is used to refer the reader to an earlier citation.

### 2.3 Referring to other published works

Academic writing involves making your own contribution to the existing literature. This involves integrating the writings, ideas, data, and words of other people. The following sections provide you with guidance on the appropriate ways in which to incorporate the ideas of others into your own text. Any errors you make in the attribution of authorship will leave you exposed to, at the very least, accusations of academic mediocrity. In the most serious cases, you could incur in plagiarism.

#### 2.3.1 Quotations

A quotation is a literal transcription from the original source, maintaining the original spelling and punctuation. If the transcription is not literal, then it must be made clear what words have been added or omitted. In the following quotation, some words have been added and others have been omitted. Note that only three periods have been used to indicate omission, and square brackets are used to indicate the additions.

"[She] told the director that there were many reasons for taking the job. They include professional development, the need to develop additional skills, and the desire for promotion. ... of these, [the most important was] her professional development."

(Simms 2002:35)

Quotations should be used with discretion, and be accompanied by the author's name, the publication date, and the page number. They should also be as brief as possible. Quotations should only be used if paraphrasing would detract from the quality and uniqueness of the original wording.

#### 2.3.2 Citations

This method recognizes authorship without using direct quotations:

Zola (1973) identifies five factors, or "triggers", that contribute to the decision to seek medical help.

You may want to give more detail about what was said by the cited author, but without using a quotation. In this case you should paraphrase, that is, reproduce the same information but using your own words. In this case you should also provide the page number of the original source, which must be included in the bibliography.

As Zola (1972:487) argues, medicine is rapidly becoming an institution of social control and is replacing more traditional institutions such as religion and the law. And it is achieving this control by proclaiming its expertise in areas of life such as aging and childhood behaviour, which in the past had not been considered medical issues.

Replacing a few words from the original text with words of your own does not count as paraphrasing, and is not acceptable practice in the academic world. Use direct quotations only when you cannot express the ideas completely in your own words.

→ **Remember: When using quotations or paraphrasing, you must provide the relevant page number in addition to the author and date.**

#### 2.3.3 For bibliographic sources whose original text could not be consulted



While conducting your research, you may come across a reference in another source that seems useful to you and that you would like to cite. As a general rule, you should then review the original source and refer directly to it. Sometimes, however, doing so is not possible, either because the work cannot be accessed or because you do not have sufficient time to find it.

In this case it must be made clear to the reader that the original source was not consulted. This may be done in the text using a phrase as in the example below:

"X, Y, and Z are cited by Smith (2003), indicating that this was the opinion of Jones (2000)."

In the bibliography you should then include a reference for Smith (the source that you read) and another for Jones (the source you did not read). At the end of the reference for Jones, the text "cited by Smith, J. (2003)" should be added, as a cross-reference to the citation for Smith.

## 2.4 *Preparing the bibliography*

All of the entries in the bibliography, or within a subsection of the bibliography, should be listed in alphabetical order by author. Dates may be positioned in one of two ways. When using the historical method, the date is normally placed at the end of each reference. In the author-date method, the date is placed directly after the author's name.

The examples below use the author-date method.

### 2.4.1 *Books*

Author's surname, name(s) and/or initials (year), title, edition number if it is not the first, place of publication: publisher.

Smith, G. H. (1990), *Education and policy: a world view*, 3rd edition, Cambridge, England: Rondell.

**Or:**

Smith, George H. (1990), *Education and policy: a world view*, 3rd edition, Cambridge, England: Rondell

### 2.4.2 *Chapters or parts of books*

Author's surname, name(s) and/or initials (year), 'chapter name or part of book', place in the book, author's surname, name(s) and/or initials (year), book title, edition number if it is not the first, place of publication: publisher.

Laws, G. and Lord, S. (1990), 'The politics of homelessness', chapter 3 in J. Kodras and J. Jones (eds.) *Geographic dimensions of United States social policy*, London: Edward Arnold.

[Note: In some cases, the year of publication of the chapter or part of the book may not coincide with the date of its appearance in the published book.]

Moodie, G. and Eustace, R. (1974) *Power and authority in British Universities*, London: Allen and Unwin, pp 45-57, reprinted as chapter 8 in L. Smithy (ed.) (1988) *Educational policy making*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

[Note: In some cases, especially with sources from a government, local authority, government agencies, etc., no author is given. In such cases, the organisation itself should be used as the author.]

Department of Education and Science (1989), *Initial teacher training: approval of courses*, Circular 24/89, London: Department of Education and Science.

### 2.4.3 *Articles published in journals*

Author's surname, name(s) and/or initials (year), 'title of the article or part of the journal', name of the journal, volume (number within the volume), page numbers.

Bartlett, L. (1991), 'Rationality and the management of curriculum change', *Educational management and administration*, 19 (1): 20-29.

[Note: In some cases, especially in magazines and newspapers, the name of the author is not given. In such cases, the magazine or newspaper name should be used as the author. In addition, as it is a publication, the magazine or newspaper name should be underlined/italicised.]

Times Educational Supplement (1991) 'Comment', *Times Educational Supplement*, August 4, p. 8.

#### 2.4.4 *Theses and other documents*

[Note: Although theses are not printed in order to be sold, they are technically "published" and should not be described as "unpublished". When citing a thesis, sufficient detail must be provided to ensure that the work can be accessed by future researchers.]

Taylor, J. (1991), *The student in an urban setting*, University of Liverpool: MEd thesis.

Goodwin, S. (1986) *Guide to Peace Corps Literacy Packet (litpak)*, Washington D.C.: Information and Exchange Division, Peace Corps. Reprinted as ERIC Document ED318 277.

#### 2.4.5 *Internet sources*

The address of the website as well as the date (month/year) of access must be included with all other bibliographic information:

Tarantola, D. (2000) *Building on the Synergy between Health and Human Rights: A Global Perspective*, [www.hsp.harvard.edu/fixcenter/working\\_papers.htm](http://www.hsp.harvard.edu/fixcenter/working_papers.htm) , accessed March 15, 2003.

### 3. Guidelines: General criteria for a thesis in Social Sciences

The following points are only guidelines for scientific work. Please speak with your advisor if you prefer to use an alternative approach.

A clearly developed argument is essential for academic writing, since words express ordered thoughts. Your thoughts and ideas should be arranged in such a way that other people can understand and respond to them. However, as in any human enterprise, good academic writing requires not only logic but also skill. While the form may vary with the discipline, all academic writing should show the development of a theory or hypothesis and its basis in evidence; you should carefully anticipate possible objections and counter-arguments, and maintain a creative drive for knowledge.

#### 3.1 *Justification and main idea*

Research must have motive, purpose and justification; the mere existence of an assignment and a due date is not enough. Conducting an investigation is not simply a matter of transferring information from one location to another or showing how much knowledge one has about a certain topic. You must do everything possible to produce an original idea after a period of investigation. Depending on the field of study, your research may involve reading and rereading texts, doing fieldwork, or conducting interviews.

Submerging yourself in the subject, guided by a series of questions and working hypotheses, you will begin to discover patterns and generate knowledge. From a number of possibilities, a single idea will emerge as the most promising. You must ensure that the idea is original and relevant.

#### 3.2 *The thesis and its development*

The thesis is the central idea that you are trying to demonstrate using the strongest possible evidence. It is likely that you will have to work through various drafts during the writing process, but remember that everything you write in the manuscript should be oriented toward establishing its validity.

Deciding on a thesis can generate considerable anxiety. You may be thinking "But how can I have an original idea about a topic to which so many academics have already dedicated their lives? I have just recently read a few books. Am I supposed to be an expert now?"

Do not forget that there are different ways to be original. It is impossible to know everything that has been or is being written and thought by everyone in the world, even with the expanse and speed of the internet. What is expected, rather, is a rigorous, good faith effort to create an original work, given the demands of the task and the discipline. A good exercise during the writing process is to periodically stop and try to reformulate the thesis as succinctly as possible, so that someone from another subject area can understand its meaning as well as its importance.

While a thesis can be relatively complex, you must be able to explain its essence. This does not mean that you have to show all of your cards from the start. To begin, guided by a clear vision of the point you want to reach, you can spark the reader's curiosity by asking questions – the same questions that guided you during your investigation – thus preparing for the subsequent demonstration. You may also begin with a sufficiently provocative observation to invite your audience to follow your path of discovery.

#### 3.3 *Tension of the argumentation*

All argumentation involves some tension. The tension stems from the natural asymmetry that exists between one who tries to persuade and those who must be persuaded. The common ground that they share is reason. Your objective is to generate an atmosphere in which any reasonable person can convince himself or herself of the soundness of your thesis. Therefore the first task, even before starting to write, is to gather and sort your findings, classifying them with by type and importance. You may choose to begin with the smallest piece of

evidence, continuing to the strongest. Or you may lead with the most convincing evidence, followed by other secondary details. You might also save a surprising detail for the end.

In any case, it is important to review the evidence that could be used against you, and generate anticipated responses to possible objections. This is the important concept of the counterargument. If there is nothing that can be said against an idea, it is probably obvious or vacuous. (On the other hand, if too much can be said against the idea, it may be time to choose a different thesis.) If you do not demonstrate awareness of possible objections and arguments, it may seem as though something is being concealed and your argument will be weakened as a consequence. You should therefore familiarize yourself with the various types of fallacies that could undermine your argument (the 'straw man' fallacy, fallacies of causation, fallacies of analogy, etc.) and try to avoid them.

### 3.4 *Structure of the argumentation*

The purpose of academic writing is persuasion. The structure of the argumentation therefore plays a central role. In order to persuade, you must set the stage, provide context, and decide how to reveal the evidence. If you are addressing a community of experts, some aspects of shared knowledge may of course be taken for granted. Nevertheless, clarity is always a virtue.

The objective of the manuscript should be stated early on, either by declaring it or by posing a question that will guide the thesis. There is a fair amount of flexibility as to where and when this happens, but within the first page or two the reader should be given an idea of where the thesis is going, although some suspense may be maintained. A common mistake is to simply list the evidence in the manuscript body without any discernible logic to the presentation. What might be sufficient in conversation is often too informal for a thesis. If the central idea is lost in a disarray of specifics, the argument falters.

The most common argumentative structure in the English language is deductive: It starts with a generalization or affirmation, and then provides support for it. This structure can be used to arrange a paragraph, as well as the entire manuscript. The other possible structure is inductive: Facts, cases, and observations are reviewed, and the conclusion is then drawn from them. There is no single model for a successful thesis; the best theses represent a well-focused mind illuminating the meaning of some aspect of the world, a mind where depth, reason and clarity all work together.

### 3.5 *The so-called exposé*

An exposé is the outline of a planned scientific work that guides the further procedure. It should provide certainty from the outset about your own approach, objectives, main questions, methods and the planned individual steps. These steps also form the basis for time management. As introductions to academic papers are usually structured in a similar way, a successful synopsis can also form the basis for an introduction once the work has been completed (adapted to the actual procedure and results, of course). An exposé of 4 to 6 pages is appropriate for an MA thesis. The procedure for a doctoral thesis is identical, but somewhat more detailed (6 to 8 pages including outline).

Structure of an exposé:

- 1. Explanation of the selected problem**
- 2. State of research (if already possible)**
- 3. Research questions**
- 4. Methods**
- 5. Planned procedure/rough outline**
- [6. Selected literature].

#### **1. Selection of problem**

Problem definition and research question are related to each other like the upper and lower ends of a funnel. The problem definition is broader than the research question that can actually be realized. This means that there is already a selection process between the problem statement and the research question, which must be made transparent in the synopsis as well as in an introduction.

The first point, the problem statement, is about locating the planned work in the discipline/research field and demonstrating its relevance. The research problem can be drawn from many sources, it can be a scientific problem that is currently being hotly debated or that seems to have received too little attention, or it can be a scientific problem that you have come across in your reading and that fascinates you. It may be a supposedly self-evident fact that you want to question, or it may be an improbability that contradicts cherished prejudices.

There are no fixed rules or methods for selecting a research topic. But there are some pitfalls to avoid: The topic must be neither "too broad" nor "too narrow". You must not get lost in a general explanation of the world nor stand in your own way in a field that is too narrow. It should not be too remote, so that material can be accessed at all, and not too topical, so that one finds an academic debate that you can build on. The topic should interest you personally, but beware of getting too involved in the problem. It could blind you to scientific clarity, to criticism, even of yourself, and to the rigour of the argument.

The topic should therefore be scientifically relevant, it should be interesting and you should consider yourself competent to work on it, i.e. when formulating the problem, you should already consider whether the topic can be worked on at all, whether there is access to material and whether it can be dealt with in the time frame of the thesis. A justification of the relevance of the chosen topic based on these possible sources should be included in the problem statement.

It is also important to formulate the overall objective of the thesis at the end of this presentation.

## **2. State of research**

The following generally applies to scientific papers: Whether the topic is scientifically interesting and relevant can be tested in the second step, in the documentation of the state of research. This is not an end in itself to demonstrate scientific expertise. By documenting the current state of research on my topic, I begin to familiarize myself with the problem. This makes it easier to work by documenting what is known about the research topic and how it has been dealt with so far. On this basis, the research question is developed and justified. In doing so, a research gap is identified.

The following questions should help to analyze the current state of research:

1. Has the research problem been scientifically investigated before?
2. Can the problem be addressed scientifically at all with reasonable effort?
3. What are the most important scientific positions in research on the selected topic (preferably pros and cons)?
4. What are the deficits and points of criticism of the existing work?

## **3. Questions**

From my knowledge of the problem area and the state of research, I can now specify my own questions in the next step. This brings us to a decisive point, because now it is a matter of the actual "conceptualization" of the project. Conceptualization means defining the basic concepts and terms and making assumptions about their relationship. Questions are formulated about the object of investigation, hypotheses are formed and assumptions about possible results are formulated. At the same time, formulating questions means focussing on the essentials, on what can be researched - in other words, narrowing down the specific section of the research that is of interest, from the ever more comprehensive universe of problems in my original topic.

## **4. Methods**

Scientific work requires the controlled application of methods. However, if you carry out your own empirical surveys, the choice of method must be justified (in terms of content as well as pragmatically).

The methods used in the social sciences are extremely diverse. There are qualitative and quantitative, it is about understanding and explaining, it is about case studies and comparative analyses. It is about secondary analysis, i.e. existing data that is analysed again based on a new question, or it is about primary surveys, where new findings are gathered, for example through a survey. Existing studies on a topic can also be analysed and

compared (in terms of method and results) for the specific question of the thesis. Many MA theses will use data in this form. Making such a procedure transparent and justifying it also belongs in an exposé.

The choice of methods naturally also depends on the material available (e.g. the availability of empirical studies on a specific topic, own interviews, documents). Which material is to be used to work on an empirical question therefore also belongs under this point.

### **5. Planned procedure/outline**

In the case of a larger research project that extends over a longer period of time, an exposé should include a work plan that formulates the planned steps and calculates the time frame. You should also draw up such a plan when writing an MA thesis. For the synopsis, however, it makes more sense to try to outline the procedure, i.e. to draft and explain a rough structure of the work. This means that, based on the specific questions and the chosen method, the "red thread" is sketched out as to how you intend to proceed in answering these questions.

Abridged, modified and translated version of:

Alemann, Ulrich von (2001): Das Exposé. Ja, mach nur einen Plan ... Düsseldorf: Philosophische Fakultät. Online unter [http://www.phil-fak.uni-duesseldorf.de/politik/Mitarbeiter/Alemann/aufsatz/01\\_expose2001.pdf](http://www.phil-fak.uni-duesseldorf.de/politik/Mitarbeiter/Alemann/aufsatz/01_expose2001.pdf) [Stand: Januar 2001; letzter Zugriff: 15.9.2009].

## Exposé for the master's Thesis

Name of the author

Working title of the thesis

1) Abstract (*must not exceed 150 words in length – generally written at the very end of the writing process*)

- a) Problem definition
- b) Objectives
- c) Research question
- d) Methodical approach
- e) Expected results

2) Problem definition and relevance of the topic

- What is the topic about?
- Why is it important? (ICM-Conflict Resolution/Transformation)

3) Objectives

- What does the research aim to achieve? (Please indicate general and particular objectives)

4) Current state of the art

- 
- Available literature concerning my topic
- Available evidence or findings concerning my problem definition
- Unknown or aspects concerning my topic
- Previous research supporting my research question

5) Central question

- What is the central research question pursued in this thesis?
- What further sub-questions derive from the central question?

6) Hypotheses<sup>5</sup>

- **Claims or presuppositions** that can be verified or falsified by the study.

7) Methodical procedure

- What research methods and technics will be used? ( Qualitative, quantitative, document analysis, participatory observation, evaluation, action-based methods etc.)
- Justification for proposed methodical procedures in relation to the research question
- 
- 
- 
- Example in empirical and exploratory studies:
- 
- *Guideline oriented interviews (qualitative research)*

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<sup>5</sup> This point does not apply for theses based on Grounded Theory or similar approaches.

- Questionnaire survey (quantitative research)
- Group discussion, expert interviews, document analysis
- Action based methods
- 

Sample:

- Who should be part of the questionnaire?
- How extensive should the sample be? (Number of interviewees)
- What documents should be analyzed?

Evaluation method:

- How should the data be evaluated? Which method will be used?

- 
- 

**8) Preliminary work**

If available, bachelor theses and master theses should certainly be included into the research.

**9) Work plan and time schedule**

*Precise distribution of time and working steps over several months, e.g.:*

Month I	Month II	Month III	Month IV	Month V	Month VI
Exposé  literature research development of questionnaire					completion of the thesis

**10) Cooperating partners (if available)**

- e.g. Cooperating institutions, companies, organizations

**11) Preliminary bibliography**

Basic literature

**12) Appendix**

e.g. research tool(s), relevant transcripts, statistical evaluations.